

Oral History Interview
with
EDWARD P. LILLY

Special Assistant to the Director of the Office of War Information, 1944-1945; Historian and Advisor to the Joint Chiefs of Staff on Psychological Warfare, 1946-1952; Member, Office of Plans, Psychological Strategy Board, 1952.

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by Neil M. Johnson
Harry S. Truman Library

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JOHNSON: I want to begin, Dr. Lilly, by asking you the date and place of your birth and your parents' names.

LILLY: I was born October 13, 1910 in Brooklyn, New York. Joseph T. Lilly was my father; he was the head of the Norton Lilly Steamship Line. Jenny A. Lilly was my mother. I had four brothers and one sister. My high school was a Jesuit high school, Brooklyn Prep. I then went to Holy Cross College in Worcester, Massachusetts, which also had a Jesuit emphasis if you want on classical training. We had Latin and Greek, and an emphasis on such fields as history.

JOHNSON: It was a liberal arts education and you had foreign languages?

LILLY: Yes, I had four years of Latin at Brooklyn Prep and three years of Greek. At Holy Cross I had two more years of both Greek and Latin. In addition, I had six years of history, of course, at different levels.

JOHNSON: And political science?

LILLY: Well, political science came in. It was one you choose from in your senior year; prior to that everything was set up by the college.

JOHNSON: So most of it was required course, with not too many options, but this was a history major?

LILLY: I was a history major. Political science, I had basically when I went to the Catholic University here in Washington.

JOHNSON: When did you graduate from Holy Cross?

LILLY: In '32.

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JOHNSON: Then did you start graduate work right after that, in the fall of '32 at Catholic University?

LILLY: Yes, at Catholic University

JOHNSON: You say your father was president or owner of the steamship line?

LILLY: The steamship line, Norton Lilly & Company, which just went out of existence about two years ago, when W.R. Grace and Company took over.

JOHNSON: Yes, I was going to ask if Grace had anything to do with that?

LILLY: Well, my father and Grace were friends. My brother continued it for about two years after father died. And then he died, and Grace came in and took over.

JOHNSON: I guess we could say you were a well-to-do family.

LILLY: Yes, but none of us had automobiles. Nobody had any significant money to use, although the money was there. In other words, I didn't have to work to go through college or go through four years of graduate school, but there was no spending as much money as you felt like either.

JOHNSON: Sounds like a solid Catholic family, is that correct?

LILLY: That's right. So far as I was concerned, that was one of the major careers of my life. I got a Ph.D. in 1936, and got married in August, I guess it was, of 1936, and then we went out to Chicago, to Loyola University of Chicago for three years. We then came back to...

JOHNSON: So you taught at Loyola University?

LILLY: Yes.

JOHNSON: Taught history?

LILLY: History, American and European.

JOHNSON: You had a Ph.D. dissertation that you wrote, I presume, at the Catholic University. What was the title of that?

LILLY: It had to do with the colonial agents who sometimes went from the colonies to England. They were the first, as it were, contacts various colonies had...

JOHNSON: Kind of like lobbyists and representatives at the time, wearing both hats?

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LILLY: Yes. And that was what I did for my dissertation. At the Catholic University they were all printed and distributed, around 160 or something like that.

JOHNSON: Let's see, three years at Loyola? Then what did you do?

LILLY: Then I came back to Catholic University in the summer of 1939. They said I had a scholarship to go to England, to do additional work on the so-called Colonial Agents, to go to Cambridge and Oxford, and go to the British Records Office.

JOHNSON: So you did that?

LILLY: No, I didn't do that, unfortunately, because Adolph Hitler got active in September of that year and the State Department said no, it wasn't necessary to go over there. I didn't find out about this until some years later, but my father knew Kennedy...

JOHNSON: Oh, Joe Kennedy?

LILLY: Joe Kennedy. He was Scotch whiskey, but in '40 he was American Ambassador to England. He had his son, Jack, over there. I didn't know anything at all about it at that time, but Joe Kennedy got in touch with Joe Lilly, who was my father, and said that since I had a Ph.D. in American history and also a contact with English history, he thought it would be a good idea if he could persuade me to come over and act as tutor, I suppose to Jack Kennedy. His father then was proposing that he go into Germany, Nazi Germany. You see, we hadn't gotten into the war yet. I took two deferments until after the war was over.

JOHNSON: Okay, it had been planned, but you didn't tutor Jack Kennedy?

LILLY: Oh no. I stayed home. In 1944...

JOHNSON: You're at Catholic University at this time?

LILLY: At that time I was. In '44, I was associate professor. Unfortunately, Catholic University gave you titles but not much money, and at that time the fifth little angel was coming. I went to the rector and that sort of business, and he said he couldn't do anything at this time for improved salary. So, I said, We, I would like to go on a part-time basis and see if I couldn't get something in Government. I went to the Office of War Information, and fortunately got into contact with a former Catholic University graduate. He was the assistant to the director, Elmer Davis. Davis wanted to have somebody start writing the history of the Office of War Information, and in '44 I got into that.

JOHNSON: So this is the Office of War Information (OWI) under Elmer Davis?

LILLY: In the spring of '45, since it was clear that the German war was running down, even though it hadn't ended in any way, I persuaded my friend to persuade Elmer David that I should

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go over to Europe and check into some of the propaganda and other news (dissemination) particularly in radio broadcasting to the Allies and to neutral peoples and to the Germans. So I went over in the beginning of May and went to North Africa, and then to Italy.

JOHNSON: This was near the end of the war, around May of '45?

LILLY: Yes. In Italy, the fighting all had stopped. Then, unfortunately, my father knew an Archbishop in the Vatican and since I was over there, he said that I should go up to Rome and see the Archbishop, that was when Pius XII was the Pope and this Archbishop arranged for a personal, private audience with the Pope.

So after that, the Archbishop said, "Well, why don't you come over to my apartment. I have two sisters and we'll all have lunch together." The difficulty was that when I had the salad, the vegetable salad, it seemed to be rather sour. Eight days later the German war ended. I was in England and most of the time I was in an Army hospital, because of what I think I got in the Vatican.

JOHNSON: Food poisoning?

LILLY: Well, no, that sort of thing, but it's where you turn yellow.

JOHNSON: Some kind of jaundice?

LILLY: That's true. Anyway, since I was over there and sort of under control of the Army, I had to go to an Army doctor, and he said it was jaundice. He said, "You go back to your room and get your goods and you will be taken to the Army hospital." At that time they didn't know a great deal about it, and if you could last eight weeks, why you got over it. But many conceivable died before then. So, I was in an Army hospital for seven weeks.

JOHNSON: As a member of that Office of War Information, you were considered Army personnel?

LILLY: Well, when you are sent over into a war area.

JOHNSON: Okay. So you were checking on propaganda facilities in Europe at this time?

LILLY: That's right, and how they handled things.

JOHNSON: This involving the American Army?

LILLY: No. See when Paris was regained from the Germans, OWI had a big propaganda organization there. And down in Naples and after the Germans were pushed out of Rome, OWI got a big organization there.

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JOHNSON: Would they take over the transmission facilities there, the radio transmission, when they liberated these cities?

LILLY: Yes, if it were still good. So I was trying to get a feeling about these things and mainly to try to get some copies of materials that were strictly from the local side, about local problems and things like that which we never received back in Washington. Staying in the hospital erased that, ruined everything mostly, because I was supposed to go into Germany as soon as the Germans stopped fighting.

JOHNSON: So you didn't get into Germany on this trip then?

LILLY: Not at any time.

JOHNSON: But you came up through France, to Britain? Had you been in France?

LILLY: Yes, but just for a short time.

JOHNSON: You did get to see some of the damage from the war, no doubt.

LILLY: Well, very little.

JOHNSON: Of course, London still had some damage.

LILLY: Oh yes, but when I got into London, I was totally taken over by the jaundice. I couldn't eat.

JOHNSON: You got a little thin at that point.

LILLY: Right. I went to an Army hospital and they wouldn't let me out for seven weeks.

JOHNSON: What happened after you did get out?

LILLY: Spent three days at the London office of the OWI. The head of that said, "Well, you shouldn't come out of the hospital and try to get all of this stuff that you want to get, the people that you want to talk to."

JOHNSON: Do you remember who was the OWI man?

LILLY: I can't remember. So he arranged that I would take a Pan-Am flying boat home from the Shannon River, and I got to New York on Labor Day, or the day after. Mr. Truman, and in fact, Mr. Davis, were desirous of wiping out OWI as an acting, continuing news agency. Being a newsman, he [Davis] thought that after the war was over, why they should not deal with propaganda. Anyway, I was given a week to recuperate and then was told that I could come back to OWI and be part of the group that tried to take care of things. In particular, I would try

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to record the officials as they came back from Europe or the Far East; get as much information as I could.

JOHNSON: Did you interview these people?

LILLY: Yes. I stayed in OWI, and it retained its personnel until about the 15th of October. Then the ones that were going to stay in news, international news, went into the State Department. They set up a new special unit or foreign information.

JOHNSON: Took the war, of course, out of the title.

LILLY: Yes. I sought the people that were taking over after Davis left. He put in charge the man who takes care of the housekeeping work—the chairs, the desks, this sort of thing—and he became the head of whatever the State Department called the section that they put the former OWI in. I sought, or made an effort, to join that group, but this particular individual and I had argued about various things. He said that history would be put in the archives, such as it was, and that would be that. So in view of what I considered the ridiculous elements [attitude?] of OWI, I thought it would be desirable to try to get [on with] the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I got in touch with a colonel, a young colonel and another colonel who had served in China. He is an operator.

JOHNSON: What was his name, do you remember?

LILLY: No. I have a feeling that it was Dickey, but I can't be sure. Anyway, I talked to them about the fact that the Army basically made a mess of trying to develop propaganda, and even didn't do very well for the covert group, which I say was OSS (Office of Strategic Services). Of course, I wasn't in the OSS, but I knew a lot of people in OSS.

JOHNSON: Were you acquainted with Bill Donovan?

LILLY: I had met him. I was still young in those days.

JOHNSON: Yes.

LILLY: Since the Joint Chiefs of Staff were still in the process of determining what they should do, I decided to try to persuade them to set up a psychological section. Shortly thereafter they were talking about the Air Force as a regular separate service; it had been the Army Air Force. Then of course, there were the Navy and the Army departments. The three services would join together as the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and one element of national planning would be the psychological aspect of military activities. I developed a paper for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral [William D.] Leahy. He called me in and said he thought that my proposal was very good and that it should be part of the Joint Chiefs of Staff's planning process.

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So, at the beginning of '46, I was put in the Historical Section of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. [I was put there] on the basis that in addition to continuing the psychological propaganda effort of OWI and the activities of the military during the war, I would be called upon by the planning unit of the Joint Chiefs of Staff when it came to making recommendations as to what would be the psychological policy.

JOHNSON: Was the Historical Section newly created, or was that carried over from World War II?

LILLY: It was new.

JOHNSON: So you got in on the ground floor of the Historical Section there, under the Joint Chiefs of Staff?

LILLY: Yes.

JOHNSON: You're Civil Service, right?

LILLY: Yes, I wasn't military, I was just civilian. Most of the people were military. The first man in charge of it was a general, and he had a historic point of view. He said, in effect, "You're a trained historian; you do what you're supposed to do." He also knew that every once in a while the Plans Section of the Joint Chiefs of Staff would be calling me out to their meetings and what not to contribute my experience of the psychological factor towards offensive activity. After the general left—his time of duty was over—I got a colonel in there, and the colonel said, "I don't think that you Historical Section should be involving itself in planning." So I said, "Well, if you get Admiral Leahy to tell you that it's all right for you to do that...and he tells me that, "That's fine." That young fellow very shortly went out into the field, and a Navy man came in with the knowledge that I was going to do that. So I was in there from '46 to three-fourths of the way through '51...

JOHNSON: ...in the Historical Section of JCS, and it did involve planning. You were an historian, who also was involved in planning.

LILLY: Yes.

JOHNSON: Well, it sounds like that should have been rather interesting.

LILLY: It was. Except that every once in a while, being a historian, or trying to be, so young and whatnot, I thought some of the proposals of the military were a waste of time. At times, why, they all were down on me, not appreciating me.

JOHNSON: You were writing up a history of the JCS or what was the equivalent to JCS during World War II.

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LILLY: Well, it was the psychological warfare effort.

JOHNSON: Okay, the psychological warfare aspect of it, which meant OWI.

LILLY: And the military efforts. Somewhere in the archives of the JCS there is probably a history; we would have gotten into it in '43. The last time I was able to find out anything, it was turned over to the secretariat of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who said that this was to be available only to the military and only on the personal approval of the Secretary of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I might also mention that before I had gone to Europe I put together about six or seven chapters on OWI. When I was leaving, this fellow had taken Davis' place; he had been the housekeeper for OWI, and his background was in the Bureau of the Budget. That's the sort of man he was; concerned about the financial side, or money.

JOHNSON: Right.

LILLY: He had said that I was going to leave around the 15th of October, '45. He called me and asked me to bring the chapters and all of the materials that I had developed, and to have my secretary lock the file cabinet and give the keys to him. I was to bring up the material that I had prepared. He said that this would be retained in the State Department files. He died about four or five years later.

I then started making queries as to what happened to the material I had prepared in OWI, and they said that it was in whatever file in the State Department, and as it used to be in the old days, it would be 50 years before it could be made available to non-State Department people. So that's one of the major backgrounds.

JOHNSON: Apparently, that was the State Department's Interim Information Service (IIS), I believe that's what we're talking about here.

LILLY: Something like that.

JOHNSON: It was under the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs.

LILLY: Right.

JOHNSON: I suppose the number of people working for the IIS, as compared to the number working for those wartime agencies, had dropped off considerably.

LILLY: Oh yes.

JOHNSON: At what point do you think we decided it was necessary to "propagandize" various parts of the world, and especially satellite countries, and the Soviet Union itself?

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LILLY: In the last year of the war, when it was evident that the Germans were going to lose, the State Department started feeling and acting that propaganda, or trying to influence European peoples, was not the duty of the Federal Government. As far as I'm concerned, a great element of that even exists today in the State Department.

JOHNSON: They didn't like the term "propaganda," of course. We like to reserve that for the Soviet Union, don't we, and reserve that term for distorted kinds of information or untruthful type of information.

LILLY: Well, but it's also the element that there are certain criteria for people who are in the State Department that they are not to do nasty things except in certain places. As far as I'm concerned [Chester] Crocker will do and say whatever he feels like as far as South Africa is concerned. Who's the other one?

JOHNSON: [Elliot] Abrams?

LILLY: No. No, Abrams, as far as I'm concerned is against letting sections of Europe tell us what we're going to do.

JOHNSON: Well, I think it's also a question of whether he feels that congress should even have straight information.

LILLY: I think that he doesn't; he really doesn't think that Congress should have the information any time they want it. As far as I'm concerned, Congress has proved itself to be a stupid group of human beings.

JOHNSON: How about Congress' role back in the Truman period? Are you saying that they were better at this, in those years than they are now, or better in this business of influencing world opinion or setting policy?

LILLY: They didn't have as much control over things in those days. Particularly starting with Nixon—in a sense he brought it upon himself—but since Nixon, Congress has constantly tried to minimize the Executive Branch. They are trying to determine what the policy, the foreign policy will be, what military policy will be, also economic policy, and unfortunately they are getting away with it.

JOHNSON: Even in the Executive Department, apparently there was a difference of opinion between the State Department and the War Department, which became the Defense Department, on matters of publicizing or trying to influence public opinion in other countries. In fact, in your writing, I think you emphasized some of those disagreements on how to approach the Soviet Union back in the early days of the Cold War. Would you want to comment on how the State and Defense Departments viewed this business of approaching the Soviet Union in matters of propaganda and counteracting propaganda?

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LILLY: Well, as far as I'm concerned, in the meetings of the PSB, you could see definite differences. The State Department did not want to take a militant attitude towards, first of all the Russians, and then after the Russians, the Communist Chinese under Mao Tse-Tung. The State Department's attitude was always, "We don't want to irritate any of these people; we don't want to get them so irritated that they will do something" and all that sort of business.

JOHNSON: They just thought it wasn't diplomatic, I suppose.

LILLY: Well, that's right; in other words, don't irritate anybody.

JOHNSON: They were diplomats, and this was not diplomatic?

LILLY: And the way to do it was to cajole them into what you wanted them to do.

JOHNSON: The carrot rather than the stick?

LILLY: As far as I am concerned today, Mr. Chester Crocker, is a beautiful example of the sort of thing that a lot of State Department people were in in the '51 to...

JOHNSON: Didn't Acheson become a pretty vocal critic of the Soviet Union and the intentions of the Soviet Union, I suppose especially after the invasion of South Korea? But even in '48, this is mentioned in the Smith-Mundt Act. Congress finally gave the State Department a legal basis for its information program. I suppose, too, that Congress was concerned that this be kept under civilian rather than military control, this propaganda, or information program, whichever term you may want to use. Was Congress concerned that this be maintained in the State Department as a civilian function rather than a military one?

LILLY: Yes. But the thing is, when you get into propaganda you have to have a difference between information programs and propaganda programs. Not that they automatically will be, contrary to each other, but they have different purposes. Information, you can consider as not having a significant influence on people. But all you have to do is look at today's news, and particularly the programs and the new stories on television, and it's very easy to see that some news is very much against a particular candidate and other news is particularly in favor of a candidate, and what is that? It's propaganda. If people are interested in our points why, that's fine, but it doesn't automatically attack or irritate.

JOHNSON: During World War II, would you say the Office of War Information was pretty factual? In other words, did it plant information, did it plant false stories to deceive the other side, or did it just stick pretty much to the straight facts?

LILLY: Well, let's put it this way...

JOHNSON: They were being selective, of course.

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LILLY: They were being selective. It was just on the basis that we would seek to make the best point of view for the Allies, without being totally negative on the enemy, so that we were using news for propaganda purposes. The German, if he's smart, realizes that and doesn't even bother particularly, but he also knows that the Czechs or the Yugoslavs, or somebody else, hearing this will take a point of view which the German doesn't want them to have, but the American does.

JOHNSON: How about credibility? Concerning propaganda, Goebbels certainly didn't have much credibility with anyone except these rabid Nazis. Did we not distance ourselves from the kind of propaganda that was perfected by Goebbels?

LILLY: Yes, but I'm sure we still do, in some ways, try to get an advantage so that it is developed in such a way that it doesn't seem to be an attack on anybody.

JOHNSON: I suppose, too, that we claim that the Soviet Union is the one that started all this propaganda business in the postwar period, that we were simply responding to a challenge that they had mounted, that they were aiming a lot of false and distorted information about the United States.

LILLY: Yes. You see what we have to keep in mind is, that in World War I, a great deal of propaganda was written in leaflets, motion pictures, also magazines and things like that. Now that we have, first, radio, and the TV, all of these things are used in order to influence the minds of other people.

JOHNSON: In fact, I did my dissertation on George Sylvester Vereck, pro-German propagandist, so I got into that rather deeply. I want to ask you quickly, did you ever hear about any UFOs (Unidentified Flying Objects) in the Truman period? In the last couple of years, there has been a document going around, a spurious one I believe, purporting that a UFO landed in New Mexico and that a special team was set up to investigate it. The project was allegedly called Majestic 12. Have you ever heard of this?

LILLY: No.

JOHNSON: Okay. We'll leave it at that. In your history of PSB you do go into the background and so we don't have to go into those kinds of details. The "Campaign of Truth"—you say it's a little foggy as to how that got started. You apparently didn't have any direct input into the beginnings of that?

LILLY: No.

JOHNSON: According to your report, one of the differences between the State and Defense Departments was that the Defense Department seemed to want to arrange things in terms of long-range plans, whereas the State Department said that long-range plans are utopian, that there are all of these contingencies arising and that you can't predict in the long range.

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LILLY: I think the point was that the Defense Department had long-range plans in the expectation, not that all of these would be carried out, but that they could be used if there was a crisis. They could take a section of this plan, and a section of that plan, and that would fit into the situation at that particular time. If there was no long-range plan, and the crisis developed, well, they'd have to come up with plans. With long-range plans, even though everybody knew that the whole thing wasn't going to be worked out, there were elements in it that could be operated and operations could commence very rapidly.

JOHNSON: Sure. The Secretary of State had to work with, of course, the Secretary of Defense and also the CIA. They all seemed to have a coordinate in terms of propaganda or dissemination of information to influence public opinion.

LILLY: Yes.

JOHNSON: I was just wondering...you know, you hear about a "black budget" today, a lot of spending that doesn't have to be accounted for. Did the CIA have spending projects that didn't have to be defined or accounted for in those days too?

LILLY: Yes, definitely. In fact, I would say that the CIA probably had [redacted] percent of the so-called covert activities; the Department of Defense would probably have somewhere between [redacted], and the remainder would be efforts on the part of the State Department to influence different people to do what we wanted them to do. In other words, all of them had their own activities, and all of them thought that theirs was the way of doing things. That's why, in my estimation, from what I knew, in the NSC a lot of it was, "Well, since I can't do it, I don't think anybody else will be able to do it," except in some very clear and definite situations.

JOHNSON: You became a member of the PSB, the Psychological Strategy Board, didn't you, after it was started?

LILLY: Yes.

JOHNSON: You wrote the history on it. Did you have much input into the organization of it?

LILLY: Not during the organization. I was still in the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I forget now what year it was that one of the people in plans, an Army colonel, had already been invited to join the PSB. He kept urging me to go over and talk to the people. I said, "Well, I want to get this one particular thing finished." So PSB came into existence, under Gray...

JOHNSON: Gordon Gray?

LILLY: Gordon Gray, right. He came in and there was a fellow—an older man from Boston—Robert Cutler, who was his assistant or deputy. He was a banker. They had started bringing people in, and I guess about two months after they had started, I joined them. By that time, they

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had gotten into basically geographical division of Latin America, Western Europe, Eastern Europe, and the Far East.

JOHNSON: Do you remember what kind of advice, or input you were able to offer to the PSB when you were there? You certainly had quite a bit of experience to offer.

LILLY: The main thing, as I remember, was that there was a section about propaganda and information in the plan. In other words, the PSB would come up with all sorts of plans, including plans relating to the diplomatic, military, economic, and propaganda and information [areas].

JOHNSON: Were you involved at all with Radio Free Europe or Radio Liberty?

LILLY: Well, in the sense that, sure, we knew about it, but we would have preferred it to have been both open and also covert.

JOHNSON: It was supposed to be privately funded, entirely, but it turned out that the CIA was funding most of its operations. That was divulged around 1970 and then Congress said, "Well, let's have this in the open and let's combine the two."

LILLY: See, this is another element of the great American point of view, that it's nasty to be covert—but it's also sensible at times.

JOHNSON: The Voice of America was overt?

LILLY: Yes.

JOHNSON: They were trying to be above board in everything they did, is that right?

LILLY: Yes. Not that you throw out overt, but you intersperse overt and covert.

JOHNSON: The covert, then, is to be hidden from most people, but it shouldn't be hidden from everybody. But who should know?

LILLY: That's right. And the ones on top are the ones who should make the decisions.

JOHNSON: What do you think President Truman's attitude was toward covert-type activity? Did he seem to be a little skeptical of covert activities, of, especially, let us say, in public information programs?

LILLY: I can't say.

JOHNSON: You don't remember what kind of attitude he indicated?

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LILLY: Actually, I don't think I got into the meetings that Truman attended.

JOHNSON: You never did meet Mr. Truman?

LILLY: No. I don't think so. They had what they called assistants—Defense Department Assistant for the Psychological Board, and the Diplomatic Assistant for the Diplomatic Board—and when those assistants wanted particular information or proposals or something like that, I, for the psychological side, would be brought in and discuss things and make proposals.

JOHNSON: What did you think was the most effective type of propaganda to use against the Soviet type of propaganda? What did you think was our best strategy, best tactic in the general area?

LILLY: Well, we emphasized a lot of open material and what could be made interesting for the Russians: what Americans have in life, and how they had a great deal of enjoyment and things like that. Also at the same time, [we were] emphasizing that Russian information and Russian activity were full of lies and contradictions and, as they knew, were not the truth. I think that was one of the things that we eventually got State [Department] not to compromise on so much as...

JOHNSON: Do you think that the Assistant Secretaries of State for Public Affairs did a very effective job?

LILLY: Well, they varied.

JOHNSON: Did you know Howland Sargeant? We have some of his papers when he was Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs.

LILLY: Yes, I think he understood this thing of—you want to be as truthful as possible, but there's no reason that you can't emphasize...

JOHNSON: The positive?

LILLY: Not only the positive, but the errors of the other side.

JOHNSON: Well, I guess Ed Barrett preceded Howland Sargeant, and sort of built that activity up. Was he an effective spokesman?

LILLY: Barrett, you know, was OWI.

JOHNSON: Oh yes, and had been with Newsweek, I think.

LILLY: That was before World War II started. Then, Barrett came in. I think he was in England for a while, I'm not sure. Then he was over here.

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JOHNSON: The Psychological Strategy board was kind of wiped out by the Eisenhower people, and they even made it hard to follow their records. Somehow the Eisenhower people wanted to wipe the slate clean and start with something different?

LILLY: Yes, they did. Unfortunately, the head of strategy for Eisenhower was the Budget Director, Elmer Staats. And as far as I'm concerned he was—what do you call it.

JOHNSON: You don't think he was capable in that field?

LILLY: No, no, he thought it was all nasty, that America was such that you never did nasty things even though nasty things were done to you.

JOHNSON: We simply should tell them the truth and that will do the job?

LILLY: Yes.

JOHNSON: What outlets did you use? Was it VOA, Voice of America, Radio Liberty, and Radio Free Europe?

LILLY: And military.

JOHNSON: And military stations, military radio. How about agents, then? Did you have agents distributing information in the Soviet Union and satellite countries?

LILLY: No. We weren't allowed to do that, other than to get the CIA to have their agents do such and such. We didn't emphasize this, that or the other; we thought it was up to them.

JOHNSON: We were talking about sending balloons over. Was that ever done, sending balloons over the Soviet Union and dropping leaflets?

LILLY: I know that it was tried. I don't know what the results were.

JOHNSON: I think we'll probably have to wind up. You're about out of time I guess. I appreciate your taking the time to be with us.

LILLY: If I felt better, I'd do more.

JOHNSON: Well, you said that you resigned from Government during the Vietnam War, under LBJ.

LILLY: True.

JOHNSON: What was your position at that point?

[16]

LILLY: That we should have done everything that we could do to increase the fighting force of South Vietnam and let them do the fighting. We can send over planners and specialists, and all that, but they do the fighting.

JOHNSON: Should be their war?

LILLY: Their war.

JOHNSON: What was your position in the Government at this point? Were you still JCS?

LILLY: No, I was in the OCB [Operations Coordination Board].

JOHNSON: Oh, the successor to PSB; you were with OCB.

LILLY: Yes, and then a good number of the people in OCB became part of the staff of NSC.

JOHNSON: Was OCB a separate agency under the President?

LILLY: Not separate, no. neither was PSB. PSB basically was a planning organization for the NSC, which then only had four planners.

JOHNSON: As compared to today.

LILLY: Well, it's a damn fool, there are too many. Too man. You get that many and there's no secrecy.

JOHNSON: There's no way for an Oliver North operation to exist in the Truman, Kennedy, or Johnson administration?

LILLY: No, I think there could have been. I would think that there could be. It wasn't that. I feel that a few people, imaginative people, with the assistance of the State Department planner in that area, the military planner in that area, the CIA planner in that area, and if it's in fact useful, the economic—food and agricultural and all that—that those people, roughly six or seven in the unit, should talk freely to each other and nobody outside the unit knows what's happening until they come up with their proposal. Otherwise, they get the ten people coming in at one time, and another ten coming in, and very soon everybody knows it.

JOHNSON: Did Point 4 make your job a little bit easier, at least in the Third World?

LILLY: Yes.

JOHNSON: Because it just wasn't talk, things were being done to improve their lot?

LILLY: Yes, that's right.

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JOHNSON: Because we had some substantial things to promote, to publicize?

LILLY: And it had impact.

JOHNSON: Okay, thank you.

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